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ABSTRACT

This book is an easy-to-read inspirational book that was written to show adult literacy students how to achieve fulfillment by taking charge of their lives. The eight short chapters of the book are printed only on the right-hand page, with inspirational quotations and space for the reader's personal thoughts on the left-hand page. Chapter titles are: (1) "A Fork in the Road"; (2) "Goal Setting Defined"; (3) "A 'Can Do' Attitude'" (4) "Get It in Writing"; (5) "Building a Support System"; (6) "Opportunity or Roadblock"; (7) "Make Your Own Road"; and (8) "Other [(Michigan State Literacy Resource Center] SLRC Resources." A bibliography and recommended reading section contains 19 references. (KC)

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Yes! *You Can* Get There From Here

Judith A. Ouvry
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Yes! You *Can* Get There From Here

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All things are possible to him that believes.
Mark 9:23

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In this life we get only those
things for which we hunt,
for which we strive, and for which
we are willing to sacrifice.
It is better to aim for something
that you want--even though you
miss it--than to get something that
you didn't aim to get,
and which you don't want!
If we look long enough for what we
want in life we are almost sure
to find it, no matter what that
objective may be.
George Matthew Adams

Nothing great was ever achieved
without enthusiasm.
Ralph Waldo Emerson

Forward

It has been stated that most people live lives of quiet desperation. How sad. But there is another way. We can have a life of great meaning and satisfaction. It's ours to grasp and it doesn't cost a thing.

Yes! You Can Get There From Here is an easy-to-read inspirational book which will show you how to achieve fulfillment by taking charge of your life. It is meant to be read, re-read, and shared with your friends and associates.

As you read this book and put its principles into

practice, be prepared for your life to change. Relationships will improve; your career will soar; and you will obtain a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment.

The top of the world is within your reach. Yes! You can get there from here!

Phyllis Hanna, Executive Director
Manistee County
Chamber of Commerce

If I have the belief that I can do it,
I shall surely acquire the capacity to
do it even if I may not
have it at the beginning.
Mahatma Gandhi

To all of the mentors
in my life with
a *Can DO* attitude.
Thank you.

I am only one, but still I am one; I
cannot do everything, but still I can do something;
and because I cannot
do everything, I will not refuse to do
the something that I can do.
Edward E. Hale

The best way to cope with change
is to help create it.

A Fork in the Road

1

For each of us, at some point in our life, we wake up and decide that something has to change. This feeling builds from days, weeks, months, or even years of dissatisfaction with some aspect or aspects of our life. This feeling could be a need to change career paths, improve our personal or spiritual life, take advantage of educational opportunities, or maybe work on a relationship.

Whatever it may be, something brought you to the point that you picked up this book—a book about goal setting and the motivation to reach those goals.

Congratulations! You've reached a fork in the road and have now taken a positive step toward taking charge of the direction in which your life is heading.

Everyday of your life, you are faced with choices. Do you get up or stay in bed? Do you go to work or school or call in sick? What will you wear? What do you eat? What will your mood be for the day?

Simple choices you may think, but each has a consequence. Staying in bed may mean that you'll miss your ride and be late for activities already scheduled for

The road to success is
often paved with speed bumps.
Michael Patterson

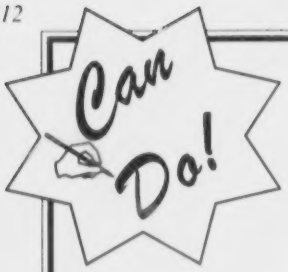
the day. Skipping work may mean a reduction in your next paycheck, and a bill won't get paid. The doughnut and coffee you chose for breakfast may leave you feeling run down by mid-morning.

We may not think of these as choices we consciously make each day, but they are choices none the less. They impact our day and influence other choices we make during the day.

When we get out of bed, what we decide to eat, the mood we are in, all contribute to the twists and turns, the bumps and bends along the path of our daily lives. They are considered everyday routine choices, rather than thought-provoking, conscious, life-altering decisions that will affect us for long periods of time.

As we approach forks along the way on our road of life, decisions become more important. Considering whether to stay in school or drop out can certainly be a fork in the road. As can be the decision to end a relationship or accept a challenging new position in another state.

The decision to incorporate goal setting into your life should also be considered a fork in the road. Because when you choose to take control of the path in which you walk everyday, your world will open up and you will no longer be held captive by the routine of daily life. Instead of reacting to daily intrusions, you will be proactively planning your destinations.



Everything starts as somebody's dream.
Larry Niven

As you read through this book, I invite you to keep an open mind. Enjoy quiet moments to reflect on the thoughts your reading has provoked. While I cannot set goals for you or motivate you into action after you've read a chapter or two, I can hope to stimulate your thought process and encourage you to select a fork in the road less traveled. I challenge you to look beyond your usual way of doing business to consider the possibilities of planning your life by setting goals.

I attended a Catholic elementary school in the Detroit area while growing up. During the last week of school, when all the desks were emptied, closets were cleaned, and final papers sorted, one end of the year project involved erasing all of the pencil marks and notes written in the textbooks. One by one the pages of the book were turned and all signs of the previous owner would disappear with the rub of an eraser. The nun in charge of the class would next hand out pieces of fine sandpaper. We would hold the book firmly between our knees, taking care to hold the book tightly closed. With the binding facing the floor, the edges of the paper were sanded until it shown bright like-new white, and the scribble marks gave way to a smooth, clean surface.

The sandpaper dust and eraser particle were wiped to the floor, and the books were collected and stacked on a shelf to await another class of students in the fall. Among the dust and the particles, were the

Be a dream maker.

thoughts, ideas, and impressions of the children who read those books. Brushed to the floor and swept away were the seeds of ideas that were planted there.

Notice that the text of this book only appears on the right hand side of the page. Personalize this book by jotting down your thoughts as they come to you while you read. If a story or an example plants a seed or idea in your mind, write it down. You'll be able to refer back to the idea at the very point in the book in which came to you. Rereading your idea or the section of the book in which you wrote it down, will help the seeds to sprout and grow.

Go ahead. Write in this book. And use a pen. Your inspirations are your own to keep. There will be no need to erase them.

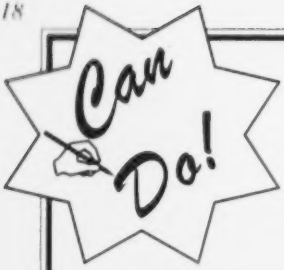
No one plans to fail; but we often fail to plan.

Goal setting defined

2

Several years ago, my husband, two daughters and I decided to drive to Dallas, Texas from central Michigan to visit my sister and her family during spring break. Flying does not rank very high on my list of favorite things to do. And besides, the drive would be an adventure and take us through nine of the United States. The twenty-four hour car trip would become a geography lesson for the kids, instead of a quick four-hour flight in which we would have missed landmarks and landscapes, incredible scenery, Graceland, the Bass Pro Shop, spilled juice, traffic jams, and numerous choruses of *"Are we there yet?"* We would not have explored the dark caverns in Cave City, Kentucky, or driven ten minutes into Oklahoma just to say *"We've been there."*

It is a long way to Texas from Michigan. Yes! You can get there from here. But the trip did require that we take time to plan our route so that we could reach our desired destination. Had we simply pointed the car south, and kept the compass needle pointed in a south-



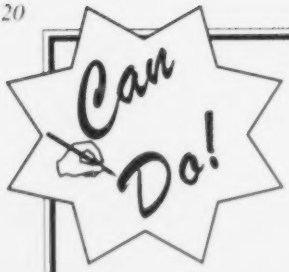
How will we know if we've gotten there,
if we don't know where we are going?

erly direction, we might have ended up in Tallahassee, Florida or Montgomery, Alabama after twenty-four hours of driving. Both are nice places, I'm sure. But they were not the destinations we had in mind for our excursion. We had a reason for choosing to visit Dallas. Arriving in Dallas was important to us.

So weeks before loading up the car, my sister sent us a map of Texas. We called the Texas Area Chamber of Commerce to request a visitor's package, we talked to others who had embarked upon the challenge of driving to Texas. We poured over a road atlas, and finally, after completing our investigation, we purchased a "Trip-Tick" package of directions from AAA.

There are a number of routes that would have gotten us to Texas from Michigan. Some may have been more scenic, and thus taken longer. I'm certain there is a route that would have been more direct, making the trip shorter. The route we chose allowed us to experience other opportunities along the way. The trip became more of an adventure than just a straight shot from point A to point B. We still talk about that adventure, although not always in an affectionate way.

Still more important than taking time to plan our route, it was essential that we had a goal — a destination determined. For us, the "goal" was to reach Dallas, Texas.



With definite goals you release your own power, and things start happening.
ZigZiglar

But what about you? What are your goals?

The dictionary defines a goal as the thing for which an effort is made. It is a purpose. A target. It is a point at which to aim. A goal is a planned destination that when reached, produces a feeling of satisfaction. Of completion.

Who needs a goal? Certainly the quarterback of a football team needs a goal, his receiver, in order to make a completed pass. Just as the receiver needs the end zone, his goal, to know when he has scored a touchdown. Imagine the Detroit Pistons playing basketball against the Chicago Bulls at the Palace of Auburn Hills without baskets at either end of the court. It wouldn't be much of a game if there were no goals, and hence no score.

Salespeople need goals. As the general sales manager of a radio station, I worked with the station's general manager to determine an annual sales goal, so that the station could establish a budget, meet it's financial obligations and show growth for the year. There was a certain amount of money that had to be made in order for the station to remain afloat and healthy in the coming year. *"Have the sales people do the best they can."* was never the annual goal. An actual dollar amount was established.

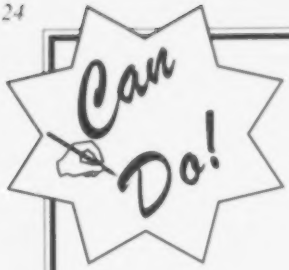
In turn, I met with the sales staff, and the annual

Win-win means it's not important that you come out on top. What matters is that you come out alive.
Bertholt Brecht

company goal was broken down into monthly goals, which were then broken into monthly sales goals for each sales person. These target goals were set high. The sales staff had to work hard to attain their monthly goals. But when they were reached, personal pride and satisfaction were the rewards.

Students need goals. Without some end result in mind, each day and each year of the student's school career would simply meld into the next. The student would wander from class to class, day after day, and go through the motions of learning. Graduation would mean only the end of a routine, rather than the reward for striving to accomplish as much as possible during twelve years of formal education.

Men and women, the young and old, all need goals to propel them through their day. I recently spoke with a neighbor who for health reasons was forced to retire early. His health began to deteriorate at a greater rate after his retirement . We talked about that. He said he no longer had a reason to get up in the morning. He had nothing to do. No place to go. Nothing to accomplish. It is the same story for many who retire after thirty or forty years of working every day. Unless they identify new goals and opportunities, their purpose in life is gone. They become bored and irritable with no focus to their lives. How many times have you heard of a man dying just a few months after retirement?



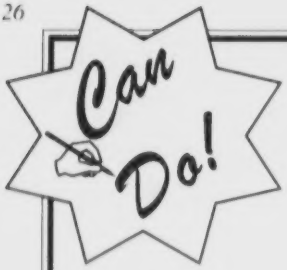
God is a dream-maker.

What constitutes a goal? Zig Ziglar, one of my favorite inspirational speakers, lists seven types of goals in his book, *See You at the Top*. Goals may be physical, financial, spiritual, career oriented, mental, social, or family goals. You need goals in each area of your life, and you need to be working toward those goals everyday of your life.

Work toward several goals at the same time. Have long- and short-term goals. This is often accomplished by first establishing a major, long-term goal, then breaking the goal down into smaller steps along the way to assist in maintaining your motivation, much as I did for the sales staff in the example given earlier. Reward yourself along the way as your "mini" goals are reached. Every step along your way taken in the direction of your goal is an accomplishment. Recognize the importance of these steps.

Dare to dream. Make your goals BIG! Reach for the stars. When you accomplish your goals, you'll also attain a heaping helping of satisfaction. There is not much satisfaction in setting a goal to get a job at $4.75 an hour when minimum wage is $4.50. And what would be the benefit of a good student setting a goal of getting not less than a "C" in any class during the next semester. Sure, the goal would be accomplished, but the rewards would be few.

But if your goal is to put your son or daughter



When you believe in miracles, miracles happen.
Unknown

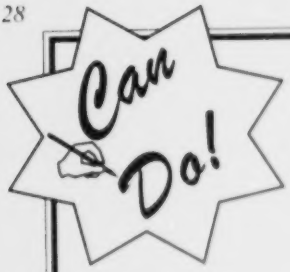
through college, and to do that you will need to overcome overwhelming odds, graduation day will not only be a celebration of the attainment of a degree, but the conferring of the degree will also signify the accomplishment of your goal.

Stop here for a moment and *dare to dream*! What would you like to do? What would you like to accomplish? Where might you like to go? What relationship would you like to strengthen?

You goals are very personal. No one can establish them for you. No one can reach them for you. No one will ever have the passion to reach your goals as much as you do.

Do not compare your goals to another's. Build your goals from within yourself. While one person may dream to earn a master's degree by the year 2000, another person may hope to increase their reading level from a 4th grade to an 8th grade level. Earning the master's degree is not a more important or more significant goal than learning to read at an 8th grade level. Both goals may be equally challenging when the individuals are considered.

I hope that by now you recognize the value and importance of goal setting in your life. It is a technique that once practiced, will take you on a powerful journey through life at a speed you never thought possible.



If you think you can, you can.
If you think you can't, you're right.
Unknown

*A **Can Do** Attitude*

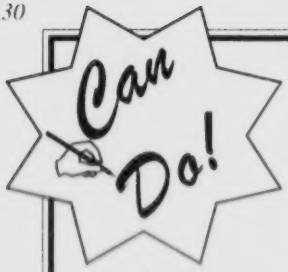
3

My daughter, Jennifer, is an avid softball player. Her first experience on the ball field was at the tender age of four as she learned to hit the ball off of a tee and to run in the right direction around the bases. During her 12-year career, she's played on community leagues, traveling teams, and school softball. And she's had the opportunity to try most of the positions.

Sitting in the stands behind home plate, parents and fans can hear the girls chanting and cheering each other on as they take their turn at the plate. When the girls take the field it's common to hear them loudly cheer "3 up, 3 down."

The cheer that I like to hear the most is "Can Do 13" (or whatever the girl's jersey number happens to be). Can do. Such positive affirmations can turn a girl with little confidence into a home run hitter. Yes, you Can Do it. Yes, you Can Do it. You can hit the ball. You can hit it hard. You can make a hit. You Can Do it.

One of the first steps you need to take to reach your goals in life involves being able to see yourself reaching the goals. A ball player must be able to close



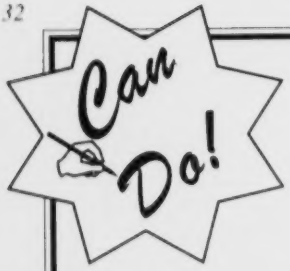
If at first you succeed,
try to hide your astonishment.
Harry F. Banks

her eyes and see herself hitting the ball. The pitcher must be able to close her eyes and see the ball cross home plate. A basketball player standing at the free throw line must be able to see the ball leave his hands and slide through the net. Maintaining a *Can Do* attitude is a vital key to reaching and surpassing your goals.

If you have never read the story of *The Little Engine That Could*, I encourage you to visit the children's section of your local library or bookstore and get the book. It is the best goal setting children's book I have ever read. It's message is clearly one that exemplifies of the power of positive affirmations and positive thinking.

As the Little Engine came to the rescue in this story, he was asked to pull a heavy load of toys up a steep hill. It was a tremendous request for such a poor, old, rusted train. But as he ascended the hill, and the train chugged and chugged, he called out "I think I can, I think I can, I think I can!" With all his might he made it up and over the steep hill and the toys were delivered on schedule.

I read this story over and over to my daughters. Although they are well past the age of most children's books, the message of this story bears repeating. Every child should hear the story of the *Little Engine That Could*. Every child should learn the Engine's message.



Tell me, I'll forget; Show me, I'll remember;
Involve me, I'll understand.
Dr. Ernest Wynder

When my girls attempt to tackle a difficult assignment or face a talented pitcher, I'll hear them say "*I can't do it.*" I'm quick to remind them of the Little Engine and encourage them to get a *Can Do* attitude.

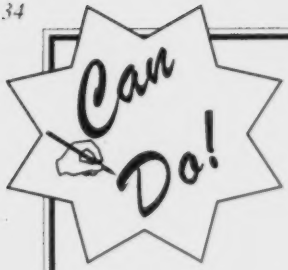
Kandu (*Can Do*) Industries, Inc. in west Michigan is an organization which creates opportunities for individuals with disabilities or employment barriers. The name alone suggests this organization focuses on a person's abilities, rather than disabilities. Every person at Kandu, can do something and is encouraged to achieve the fullest extent of their capabilities

As a former real estate agent, I had the opportunity to hear many motivational speakers at our annual meetings. Keeping real estate agents productive during winter months can prove to be a difficult task. So usually the nation's most respected speakers were brought to our conventions.

Of all of the speakers I had the pleasure to hear, one in particular left a lasting impression on me. I'm reminded of his message often.

It seems his young son was at the breakfast table and wanted to pour himself a glass of milk. The boy being young and still a bit uncoordinated, and the milk carton being near full and weighty, his mother, not looking forward to wiping spilled milk off the floor told him, "*Don't do that. You're gonna spill that.*"

He proceeded to fumble with the carton and



Attitude is a little thing
that makes a big difference.
Unknown

again she said, "*You're gonna spill that. Tommy, put down that carton. You're gonna spill that milk.*"

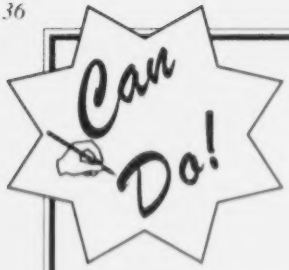
Do I need to tell you what happened next? As his mother predicted, several times over, the carton slipped from his little hands and milk spilled all over the floor. He fulfilled his mother's prophecy. He lived up to her expectations of him.

The speaker wondered out loud what the outcome would have been had the mother said to the boy, "You can do it. You can do it." Would Tommy have had the confidence to carefully handle the carton and fill his glass with the cold milk?

How often do we live up to the expectations others have of us, even when those expectations fall below what we want for ourselves? Have you ever given up on a project or idea because others told you it could not be done? Don't sell yourself short or let others sell you short. Don't permit the negativity of others to block your way or slow you down.

Raise your expectations of yourself and your ability to reach your goals. Develop a *Can Do* attitude, and you will release the power within yourself to *Can Do* whatever you dream.

Once you've developed a *Can Do* attitude, share your gift of positive affirmations with others. Tell your children, your friends, your coworkers. They too, *Can Do*! with a *Can Do* attitude.



Failure is the opportunity to begin again, more intelligently.
Henry Ford

Get it in Writing

4

Spend the afternoon in any courthouse across America, and you're sure to hear a case involving a broken promise. It might be a homeowner suing a builder because the quality of the materials used in a home improvement project were below the standard quoted in their earlier discussions.

How many friendships have been destroyed because of one friend trusting the other to repay a loan? No agreement was signed, and then the borrower defaulted on the loan.

Have you ever purchased a used automobile from someone who told you the car was in great shape? *"You won't have any problem with this gem!"* And what a gem it turned out to be. Shortly after the purchase you discovered the car had a history of trouble. But without a written agreement, it was your word against his, and you learned a lesson.

To function in the world, we do need to have a general feeling of trust in people. We can't walk around paranoid all day that someone is waiting around to take

The reasonable man adapts to the world: The unreasonable man persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man.
George Bernard Shaw

advantage of us. However well intentioned, it is not uncommon for people to fail to meet an expectation. Often that failure stems from a term we used in real estate sales as a "failure to establish a meeting of the minds."

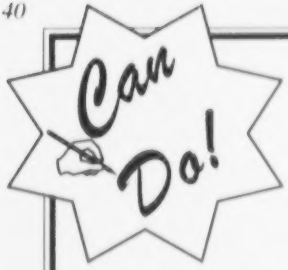
Each of us carries in our mind, a paradigm, an understanding or picture, of what certain words or terms mean. "Good" may mean one thing to you and another thing to me. "Soon" may mean "in a few minutes" in one instance, or in another, it may mean "in a few weeks."

And isn't it easy to remember discussions and events from your own perspective?

After a car accident, the police are usually called in to investigate the cause. Witnesses are often separated and interviewed individually. The investigating officers have learned through experience that the stories of witnesses to the same accident can vary to the point that one would think that they saw two very different accidents.

In reality, they did. The driver of one car saw the accident from one angle. The driver of the other saw the accident from another perspective. And each driver came to the accident with his or her own reality. In a communication class I recently took, this phenomenon was described as one's "possible world."

Newly married couples learn about "possible worlds" early on in their marriage.



No bird soars too high if he soars with his own wings.
William Blake

I remember listening to a coworker talk about her husband shortly after they married. Her new husband was an only child from a home where his mother was a "stay-at-home mom" who did all of the housework, made delicious meals everyday, and was happy doing it. In his possible world, all mothers are like that.

His new bride on the other hand, was from a home where her mother held a part-time job. With three kids in the family, each was expected to help with the chores and assist with making dinner. The responsibilities of running the household were divided equitably between each of the members of the family. In her possible world, all families are like that.

When these two set up housekeeping, a war erupted. Not long after the wedding, they discovered that their paradigms, their possible worlds of organizing a home, did not mesh. Both believed that their idea of running a home was the correct way. The other's idea was wrong.

In truth, neither was the correct way. And through counseling, they were able to create a new way of running a household that worked for both of them.

When you first begin to set goals for yourself, it's possible that the "old" you and the "new" you might come in conflict with each other. Your new and old paradigms may conflict. "Soon" to the old you may not mean the same thing as "soon" to the new you. Trust

Effective people realize that things are created mentally before they are created physically.
Stephen R. Covey

may become a problem. You had good intentions of meeting a deadline, but something distracted you and prevented you from fulfilling an obligation. You meant well; things just didn't work out as planned.

To help you develop a clearer understanding of your goals and your intent to meet those goals...put them in writing! It is not enough to think to yourself... "I'm going to trace our family tree."

If your goal is to trace your family tree, *write it down*! And be sure to write down the steps you are willing to take to meet that goal, along with a timeframe in which you will take the steps to meet the goal.

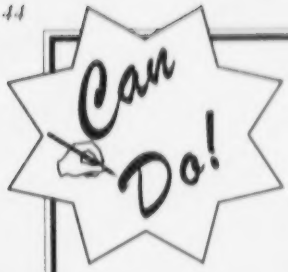
Plan your trip. Map the path you will follow. Using an outline form may help you identify specific steps you will need to take to meet your goals.

A friend of mine who is an avid goal setter has three lists on the front of her refrigerator. The first is her list of goals for the month: read a particular novel; make a repair on her home; save a specified amount of money; attend a week-end retreat at her church.

The second is her list of goals for the year: complete three courses toward her degree; pay off a loan; rebuild a broken relationship.

Her third list is her long-term goal list: complete her degree; save enough money to send her daughter through college; put an addition on the family room.

Because her goals are specific and in writing,



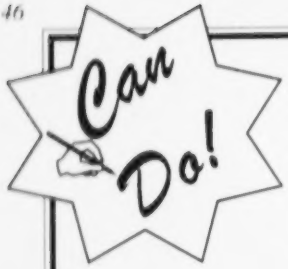
The habit of personal leadership means to begin each day with a clear understanding of your desired direction and destination.
Stephen R. Covey

and because they are posted on the refrigerator where the world can see them, she usually meets her goals. Of course, the details on exactly how she will attain her goals are written in a notebook. She keeps track of and measures progress toward her goals in her notebook.

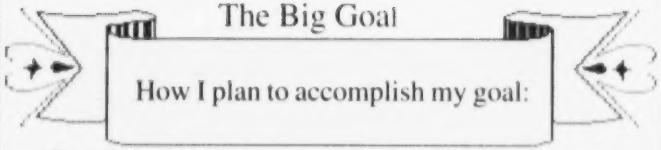
With every trip through the kitchen, she is reminded that she has a contract with herself to meet certain expectations. By putting her goals in writing, she has developed a "meeting of the minds" with herself. She has mapped out her plan to make progress in her life. She has given her daily routine direction. She knows where she is heading.

Written goals change wants from dreams to reality. "*Gee, I'd really like to mend my friendship with Karen.*" becomes "*Beginning today, I will take one step each week toward repairing my friendship with Karen.*" Smaller steps along the road to repairing that friendship may be to: call Karen this week; send a thoughtful card; take Karen to lunch to talk; apologize for a wrong doing; plan a day-long outing; set up a system to prevent a disagreement in the future.

Because the goals are written, you can reward yourself as you check off accomplishments along the way. You can see and measure progress toward your goal. And you can plan a new route if things aren't working out like you had hoped.



Happiness is not a goal; it is a by-product.
Eleanor Roosevelt



Step 1._____

A._____

B._____

C._____

Step 2._____

A._____

B._____

C._____

Step 3._____

A._____

B._____

C._____

Yes! I Can Accomplish My Goals!

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

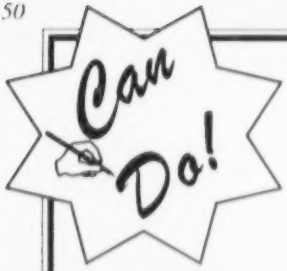
The mind is the limit - - it's not the body.
Arnold Schwarzenegger

Your goals must be specific. They must be focused. My daughter's coach has the girls begin weight training early in the year to prepare them for softball season. They lift weights and perform strengthening exercises for about twenty minutes, two or three days each week after school. By the time the season is ready to begin, the girls have developed considerable power, energy, and strength to hit and throw the ball.

But all that power and energy would be useless if the girls could not see the ball or see the girl to whom the ball was being thrown. If they could not focus on their target, if they did not have a specific goal in mind, having the power and the strength would be of no use.

Take a moment to review the thoughts and ideas you've written on the left hand side of the pages as you've read through this book. Is there any one great idea that pops off the page? How specific is that idea? Does the idea have a clear direction or focus?

Think more about that thought or idea. Can you expand on it? Can you give it a clearer direction or make it more specific? *"I'd like to start my own business."* is a goal. But *"I'd like to open a quick print store in the strip mall by the end of summer."* is a specific goal with direction.



Treat your goals as guides. They should stretch and challenge you but not defeat you.
David McNally

Take time now to write down specifics about your idea. If you need more room, get a journal. Use the journal to expand on your thoughts and to record your progress. By writing down and re-reading your notes, you will be able to stay focused on your goals over time. Your written notes will serve as a contract and will help to ensure that the new you and the old you have a meeting of the minds.

Look at your written goals. Now take a moment to consider your personal behavior. Is it conducive to your achievement of your written goals? Do your written goals include positive steps toward changing your behavior in order to propel you toward your goals?

Go ahead. Set your goals. Identify the steps to need to take. And get them in writing. It will be your next step up the ladder putting you on top of the world.

May you live all the days of your life.
Jonathan Swift

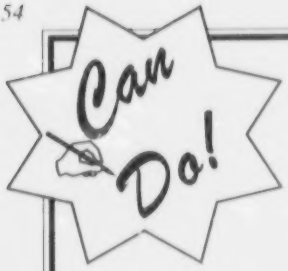
Building a Support System

5

My husband, Gary, and I and the girls spend most of our summer weekends camping at a peaceful lake in Manistee County. In the evening, we'll often drive a few miles west to walk along the clean, sandy shores of Lake Michigan to watch the spectacular sunsets that seem to appear more intensely night after night. God certainly must be an artist.

The shoreline would be a beautiful place to live. Imagine a tall soapbox style home with huge picture windows overlooking the lake. Inside, the floorplan would be open and spacious, filled with artwork made from unique-shaped objects gathered from the beach. A glass vase filled with small round stones would sit on a table. A bowl full of shells would always generate conversation. Driftwood would line the deck that wraps all the way around the house.

But anyone who has ever lived on the shores of Lake Michigan knows that the scene changes immensely from summer to winter. During the cold months,



The darkest hour means
dusk is just in sight.
Dan Miller

strong winds blow from the northwest and push the icy waters hard into the shoreline. The beaches erode as the snow and wind blow the sands and water night after night, day after day through the long white winters.

The most beautiful home, built with the finest of construction materials, filled with love and tenderness, could not survive the harshest of Michigan's winters if the foundation of that home was not solid and buried deep into the sand. Rows and rows of cement block foundation secured to poured footings are needed to keep the home from being washed out from underneath by the lapping waves and untamed winds. The strong foundation protects the home and gives it the support it needs when the turbulence outside is at its worse.

Just as the storm erodes the shoreline of the most incredible beaches, negativity, defeat, hardship, and difficulties can erode your goals. When the road you choose to travel becomes difficult and filled with unexpected twists, turns, and bumps, your goals begin to wash away. Bit by bit like tiny grains of sands, your ideas are carried away with the wind.

To protect your goals, build them from a sturdy foundation. Put supports in along the way as you build your dreams. Use the finest of construction materials, and leave plenty of open space in which to grown.

What sorts of supports should you incorporate

Fortunate are the people whose roots are deep.
Agnes Meyer

into your goals? In my life, the presence and support of mentors has been my greatest asset.

As early as the age of twelve or thirteen, I have been blessed with avid supporters. Our next door neighbors, the Cataldos, took a liking to me soon after they moved into the neighborhood. From the beginning, they encouraged me, supported me, and listened to me. If I had a problem, or needed a shoulder, they were there for me. A few years have past, too many to count, and we are no longer living in the same neighborhood. But the friendship that started so very long ago was built on a solid foundation of love and trust; they are never more than just a phone call away.

After marrying and relocating to the west Michigan area, I met several people with a zest for life who encouraged me to accept new challenges, to take chances, and to believe in myself.

Ky Haukkala (that's a Finnish name from the UP of Michigan, in case you're wondering) was a school teacher who spent her summers in northern Michigan about a mile from our home. She taught journalism and had a flare with words that created vivid pictures as she spoke and wrote.

Ky encouraged me to continue to work toward my bachelor's degree. She would read and edit pages and pages of composition papers, having me rewrite and rewrite (using a typewriter....no laptop computer at

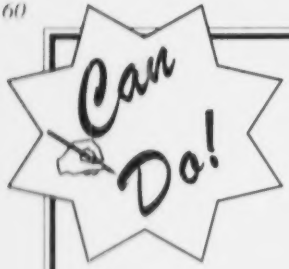
Is there another way to do this?

that time) until each sentence was perfectly formed and words danced on the pages. Her lessons were never meant to derail my self-esteem or enthusiasm. Instead, she pushed me to achieve my very best and extend the level at which I wrote.

She praised my accomplishments as a mother, gardener, homemaker, wife, and community volunteer. And she was eager to learn from me also, demonstrating that to be a teacher, you must also be willing to be a student.

My friend Ky died after a thirteen-year battle with breast cancer. When she was first diagnosed, she was told she would live only three to five years. But she lived to see her daughter marry, her first grandchild born, and her son graduate from high school and the coast guard academy. She did not see me graduate from college, but she knew I would. She had faith in me and she supported me every step of the way. That is the way a mentor should be. That is the kind of support you should seek out to help you achieve your goals.

So often in this world of downsizing and poor self-images, others are quick to cut us down and tell us why something can't be done. If you accomplish too much in the day at work, you might make a coworker look unproductive, causing tension in the office. I was once told by a coworker to "*pace myself.*" It was hard for others to keep up with me.



Be a risk taker.

Surround yourself with people who feel good about themselves and are happy to be alive -- people who are not so concerned with how they look to everybody else, but who are happy to see others doing well. Find mentors with high self-esteem who will not be threatened by your success. Because when you surround yourself with these kinds of people, you will be a success. They will help you. They will provide you with the strong foundation and support you will need to achieve your goals.

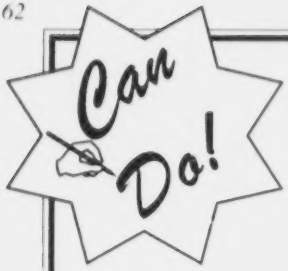
In this world, there is room for everyone to be a winner. People with a mentoring spirit understand this. They understand that your success will not diminish them; it will, in fact, enhance them and compliment them, because you will have the ability to share your success with them.

Success is contagious. When you work toward a goal or on a project, your enthusiasm has the potential to spark a fire in others, and a greater fire inside of yourself.

Watch an infant learning to walk. At first, while on her belly, she pushes up keeping all fours firmly planted on the floor. In time, she pulls herself up using furniture for support. As confidence builds, she lets go and claps.

As my niece was learning to walk recently, her mom would get on the floor on one side, and her dad would get down on the other. Perched on the floor

63



Patients is needed with everyone,
but first of all with ourselves.
Frances de Sales

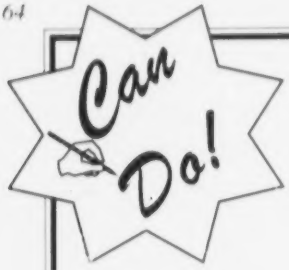
between two trusting and supportive parents, she would cautiously let go of one hand, and face the challenge of taking the few steps into the hands of the other. With pride she beamed and clapped at her success. In no time, she had the reliance to take more and more steps, soon confident enough to walk all on her own.

The State Literacy Resource Center office at Central Michigan University where I work is such a haven for contagious success stories. The office is an environment that encourages risk-taking. We constantly strive to try new advancements in technology and to provide services and resources that the adult education field needs, rather than to provide only what we've always provided.

The staff is a supportive one. I was given tremendous support and encouragement when I wrote my first book for the SLRC office. And I continue to receive support as I undertake this project.

When ideas are submitted in this office, instead of hearing, *"It won't work."* we hear *"What can I do to help?"* These are the kinds of people you should surround yourself with so that you can reach your goals and attain your highest heights. These are the people with the "Can Do Attitude."

There are some wonderful books on the market that can also provide support to you. When I have



Most human beings have an almost infinite capacity for taking things for granted.
Aldous Huxley

mental blocks, am feeling down, or am having difficulty staying focused on a project, often times, picking up a motivational or inspirational book and reading a chapter or two, renews my strength so I can get back on track.

Look for strength in prayer or meditation. Putting your life and goals into perspective can help you to refocus your energies.

When you reach a roadblock, pull out your journal and write about it. Rereading your notes may help you see your goals from another perspective. Allow yourself to take a break if necessary. You may decide that the path you had chosen isn't the right path for you. You may decide you need to change your route or reverse directions altogether. Your journal becomes one more block on your solid foundation.

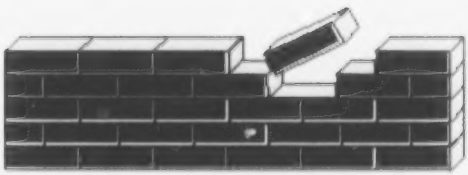
Sitting at the beach one sunny afternoon, I observed a family from Ohio stopping to enjoy the warm air and cool water. Their young daughter spent her time digging in the water and searching along the shore for small stones and shells. She slowly turned each precious treasure in her little hands, feeling it's smoothness and taking in the specialness of each one. The most intriguing were carried to shore and carefully placed in her sandpail. When it was time to leave, her mother called to her and told her to throw the stones back into

The average person goes to his grave with his music still in him.
Oliver Wendell Holmes

the water. "*You can't take those with you.*" she told her daughter .

The treasures that you find in mentors, books, short stories, prayer, and meditation are yours to keep. You don't have to throw them back. Keep them in a safe place. And from time to time go back to them to remind yourself why they were so precious to being with. Use each small pebble to build your solid foundation.

The foundations of tall buildings and complicated architectural structures are made of many blocks. The foundation of your support system should be as multi-faceted as the foundation of the most interesting building, with each piece adding to its strength and vigor.



When life gives you lemons,
make lemonade.
Unknown

Roadblock or Opportunity

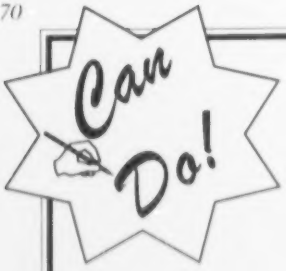
6

When I was a little girl, my mom purchased a set of colorful posters from a catalogue. She taped them all over the house. One hung on the bathroom wall: "*Squeeze the toothpaste from the bottom of the tube and put the top back on.*" With ten children in the house, the poster probably helped to reduce the number of times she needed to repeat that phrase.

Another hung on the door we passed through on our way out of the house each morning on our way to school. It pictured a man holding his head in his hands: "*Did you remember everything?*" it asked.

Another that I remember was a bright poster filled with sunny yellow lemons. It read: "*When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.*" That phrase has always stuck with me and I have caught myself repeating it to others, and to myself at times.

The process of making lemonade out of life's lemons is one of reframing a situation. In an earlier chapter, we talked about paradigms and possible worlds. How you view a situation depends on your



Success is not how high you fly,
it's how high you bounce when things hit bottom.
Gen. George S. Patton

perspective. One person sees lemons while another sees lemonade.

When a bump or twist or turn appears on your goal setting path, stepping around it or going over it may give you a different perspective of the situation. That sidestep may be to your advantage. It depends on your perspective of the situation. Is it a lemon or lemonade? Is it a roadblock or an opportunity?

I was well on my way up the ladder while employed at a radio station. I was earning a good income and enjoying many benefits of the job. I was devastated when my job came to an abrupt end. My hopes and dreams were gone. I woke up in the morning and had no place to go and no direction left in my life.

It took awhile, but I eventually made lemonade. I used the time off work to complete my undergraduate degree that had eluded me for so long. I started my own business. I regained lost confidence and regained the control over my time, control that I had lost working long hours every week.

Had I not lost the job at the radio station, I might never have met the people I work with now who provide me with encouragement and support. I might not have had the opportunity to work toward my graduate degree had I not been forced to make a career change. Without the support of my current employer, I would not be

Shift your focus.
Dr. Mary Ellen Brandell

writing this book. Loosing my job was an opportunity. It just took awhile for me to realize it and make lemonade.

You cannot plan for specific obstacles you are bound to encounter along the pathway of achieving your goals. But you can prepare to face those unexpected challenges.

Dr. Mary Ellen Brandell at Central Michigan University is a coworker and a friend. She has always been a strong supporter of mine. Her endless energy is contagious. When someone is facing an obstacle, her words of encouragement are always the same, "*Shift your focus.*" There is more than one path that can take you to your goal. While you may have planned to take a particular road on your journey, if that road is under construction or blocked, take another road. The new road just may present you with unexpected and exciting new opportunities.

Have you ever driven on a road through the hilly countryside? Your car slows as it climbs up one steep hill. It picks up speed again as it crests the hill and goes back down the other side only to slow again as it faces yet another challenging hill.

It's nearly impossible to maintain a steady speed. Driving through the hills requires the driver to adjust his pressure on the accelerator and apply the brake at times to keep from loosing control as the car races down the hill.

Eliminate stinkin' thinkin'.
Zig Ziglar

You, too, will need to adjust your speed to maintain control as you work to achieve the goals you have set for yourself. Sometimes you'll need to apply more pressure to your accelerator if you loose momentum climbing hills and overcoming obstacles along the way.

Other times, when things are moving too fast and you feel you're loosing control, you may need to apply the brakes and slow down. When you find yourself moving too fast, it's not uncommon to loose your focus. You may even begin to move in the wrong direction. If this happens, it OK. Just slow down. Step back. Take time to refocus yourself on your goals, and begin again.

One key ingredient in overcoming challenges along the way is your attitude. Zig Ziglar reminds us to "do a check up from the neck up," to "eliminate stinkin' thinkin' " and to avoid "hardening of the attitudes."

Your attitude acts as a filter as you look at obstacles along your chosen path. Do you see the bumps and twists as opportunities or roadblocks? It depends on your attitude. Is it a positive or a negative attitude?

Phyllis Hanna, Executive Director of the Manistee County Chamber of Commerce has always impressed me with her award-winning attitude. While visiting with her recently in her office during the Manistee National Forest Festival, her busiest time of the year, she took two phone calls. Both times she began her phone conversation with *"Tell me, what*

Try this: Draw four straight connecting lines, going through each of the dots, without lifting your pencil.

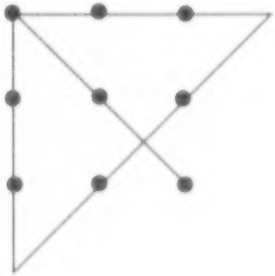
Misery is optional.
Joy is a choice.
Dan Miller

wonderful thing has happened today?" How could the caller respond in any other way than with a positive remark? The phone calls had to be productive, even if the callers were calling to report a problem or roadblock.

Look for the positive. A Garth Brooks song titled *Unanswered Prayers* is such an example of finding the positive. As a young man, the singer had hoped to marry his high school sweetheart. He prayed to God every day that they would marry. It never happened. He thought God didn't hear his prayers. Years later, attending a hometown football game with the woman he eventually married, he talked to his long-ago love. She was not the same person he remembered. Later, he looked at his wife and thanked God for unanswered prayers.

Have you ever heard the phrase "think outside of the box?" Try to solve the puzzle on the previous page. Often times to achieve a goal we need to look at our situation from another perspective. Do not restrict yourself to doing things the way they have always been done. Expand your possibilities.

Sometimes the road to achieving your goals will not be traveled as planned. At times, you will need to adjust your route or schedule. By maintaining a positive attitude, you will make lemonade and enjoy the benefits of those adjustments.



Think outside of the box.

Make Your Own Road

7

Throughout this book, I have given you many examples and ideas for incorporating goal setting into your life. These ideas by no means are suggested as being the only ways to set and meet goals in your life. They are meant to inspire you and to motivate you to take positive action to improve your life.

Parts of me fall between the pages of the binding of this book. The glimpses of goal setting come from my personal experiences and observations, from the many mentors who have contributed to my formation, from the numerous seminars that I have attended over the years, and from books and articles that I have read.

My mother will attest that from the tender age of one-and-a-half years old, I demonstrated my strong determination by holding my breath until I passed out if I didn't get my way. I believe that determination has carried me through many tough times and has contributed to my success along the way.

But that determination is only a part of my success. I continue to rely on my mentors. When my "Can

Should I drop out of school?

Pros	Cons
No more homework	I'll miss my friends
Can earn some money	Wages will be low
Won't need a suit	Won't get promotions
Can sleep in	I'll get bored

I can't pay all of my bills!

1. Get all of my bills together	- organize a file box
2. Write letter to each	- ask Jill to help
3. Pay smallest bills first	-

Try analyzing one of your problems or concerns using a "T" chart. Sometimes it helps to see your alternatives.

Do" attitude slips into a "Can't Do" attitude, I pick up the phone and call a mentor or read a book to get re-charged.

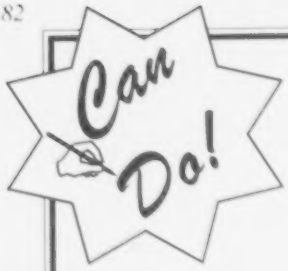
When a problem appears to be overwhelming, I tend to break it down into smaller bite size pieces to work through them.

Look at the "T" chart on the previous page. This is a rather simplistic model for solving all sorts of problems. Write the main problem, dilemma, or choice you need to make at the top of the chart. On either side, identify the pros and cons.

Use the chart to brainstorm solutions. Again, write the main problem at the top. On one side list the challenges you're facing regarding the problem. On the other side, write the solutions and prioritize them. Take care of the easy solutions first. Tackle others as you gain confidence.

During the spring flooding in the Ohio Valley in 1997, news coverage of the unfolding events depicted an overwhelming problem. Not just one city or town faced the devastation of the floods, but hundreds. So many were left homeless. So many lost all of their possessions. Watching the news left me feeling completely helpless. There was nothing I alone could do to help.

Along with a close friend, I helped to organize a relief effort to help just one small town, Boston, Ken-



Too many people miss the silver lining
because they're expecting gold.
Maurice Seitter

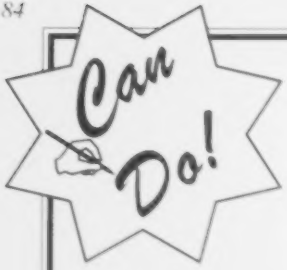
tucky. With our entire community pulling together, relief supplies, money, prayers, and support were sent to this town of just 400 families. A significant impact was made to relieve their suffering.

Seeing the positive impact of our efforts, and listening to the stories of hope emerge from Boston, faith was renewed and lasting friendships were made. The personal feeling of pride and accomplishment that I felt has flowed into my other work. Other communities have taken on similar projects. Even the people of Boston who suffered are offering hope to others.

How you choose to attain your goals in life will depend on the stories you read, the people you come in contact with, the seminars you attend, and your personal experiences. I can only hope that what you have read here has inspired you to take some action.

You will create your own life's road map. You will be the one who decides which path you will choose when you come to a fork in the road. It will be up to you to maintain your *"Can Do"* attitude. Life is about making choices and living up to your responsibilities. There is no room for excuses.

Choose to associate with the people who will recharge you and encourage you to maintain your positive self image. Choose to read books, stories, and articles about people who have overcome overwhelming odds to meet their goals. Choose to make goal



What is standing in your way?

This is the highest wisdom that I own...
freedom and life are earned by those
who conquer them each day anew.
Goethe

setting an everyday part of your life.

Then begin to take responsibility for living up to those choices and dealing with the consequences of those choices.

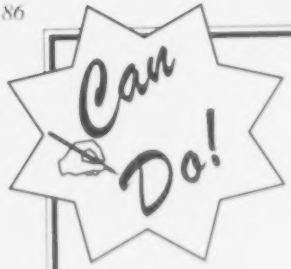
If you find yourself constantly confronted with your old habits, or if past hurts block your way to success, pack them away. Get a journal or a notebook. Spend time writing about the habits you'd like to avoid. Write about past hurts. Write about the obstacles that are blocking your path to success.

Then, wrap the journal in paper and place it in a shoebox. Tie a string around the box and tuck it away in a closet. In doing this, you're acknowledging that past hurts did exist. You are recognizing bad habits. But then, you are also putting them on a shelf and getting on with your life with a postive, healthy attitude.

Some of you who purchased this book also received a *"Can Do"* pin. Wear it with pride. Look at it often to remind yourself that you, too *"Can Do."* And to help you maintain your new attitude, share it with others. There is no greater gift that you can give to another.

The library is full of books and articles about people who have been successful—successful in their personal, professional, social, or spiritual lives. Read them.

And remember, you, too, *"Can Do"* with a *"Can Do"* attitude.



Man was designed for accomplishment,
engineered for success,
and endowed with the seeds of greatness.
Zig Ziglar

Other SLRC Resources

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The State Literacy Resource Center (SLRC) located at Central Michigan University, under original authorization of the National Literacy Act of 1991, serves as a coordinating entity for professional development, research and information dissemination, and referral for adult and literacy education programs and providers throughout the state of Michigan.

The extensive networks facilitated by the SLRC are now, more than ever, critical to sustaining the field and helping it adapt to ongoing funding and programmatic change.

Likewise, SLRC capacity to directly deliver needs-based professional development statewide is much needed as adult educators grapple with maintaining professional standards at a time when the field is being redefined by policy makers and education reformers.

This publication is just one of the SLRC's many efforts to provide professional development and support to the adult and literacy education field.

Great works are performed not by strength
but by perserverance.
Samual Johnson

The SLRC also publishes a journal, *Literacy Networks*, which serves as a bridge between community providers and as a forum for important issues concerning literacy. Such a bridge demands a blend of voices not normally recognized in "academic" journals. The varied voices we publish are involved in the ongoing effort to define literacy in ways that make its social causes and consequences apparent.

We welcome manuscript submissions from all literacy providers. Contact the SLRC office for additional information.

Released in the fall of 1996, *Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations*, also written by Judy Ouvry, is a handbook based upon a two hour seminar offered through the SLRC. It teaches a simple-to-use system for marketing any nonprofit organization on a year 'round basis, using a limited budget.

The SLRC also publishes *Connections*, a newsletter for the adult and literacy education field, and the *Executive Guidon*, a newsletter for top level managers of adult and literacy education programs.

Scheduled for release in the fall of 1997 is a jobs outlook survey and a survey of literacy in Michigan. Both were researched through Central Michigan University for the SLRC.

We build our character from the bricks of habit we pile up day by day.
Zig Ziglar

To order any of our publications, to be added to our mailing list, or for further information about any SLRC resources, please contact the SLRC office at

219 Ronan Hall
Central Michigan University
Mount Pleasant MI 48859
(517)774-7690

Or you may contact us through the world wide web at our home page: http://slrc.ehhs.cmich.edu/

The habit of being proactive, or the habit of personal vision, means taking responsibility for our attitudes and actions.
Stephen R. Covey

Bibliography and Recommended Reading

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These are just a few of the publications I recommend you read to help propel you forward in your quest to begin incorporating goal setting into your life. Some contain those uplifting positive messages we all need to combat the negative ones that so often bombard us. Refer to these books often to help keep you motivated and thinking with a "Can Do" attitude.

Buzan, T. (1983). The brain users guide. E. P. Dutton.

Covey, S. (1993) The seven habits of highly effective people. Covey Leadership Center. Provo, UT.

Dawson, R. (1985). You can get everything you want but you have to do more than ask. Simon & Schuster. New York.

DeAngelis, B. (1994). Real moments. Dell Publishing. New York.

de Bono, E. (1990). I am right, you are wrong. Viking. New York.

Fuller, E. (1980). 4800 wisecracks, witty remarks, and epigrams for all occassions. Avenel Books. New York.

Lynch, D. and Kordis, P. (1988). Strategy of the dolphin. William Morrow. New York.

Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul
And sings the tune without the words
And never stops, at all
Emily Dickinson

Mamchak, P. and Mamchak S. (1987). Encyclopedia of school humor. Parker. New York.

McNally, D. (1991). Even eagles need a push. Delacorte Press. New York.

Miller, D. Living, Laughter & Loving Life. 1-800-917-BOOK.

Ohrbach, B. (1995). All things are possible. Pass the word. Clarkson Potter. New York.

Patterson, E. (1993). 1001 reasons to think positive. Simon & Schuster.

Peters, T. (1994). The pursuit of wow. Random House. New York.

Piper, W. (1961) The littel engine that could. Platt & Munk.

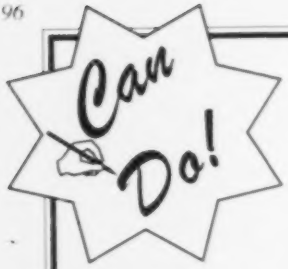
Poley, M. (1990) How to develop your most important asset. SkillPath Publications. Mission, KS.

Russo, J. and Schoemaker, P. (1989). Decision traps. Doubleday. New York.

Senge, P. (1990) The fifth discipline. Doubleday. New York.

von Oech, R. (1986). A kick in the seat of the pants. Harper & Row.

Ziglar, Z. (1977). See you at the top. Pelican Publishing Co. Gretna, LA.



Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die,
life is a broken-winged bird
that cannot fly.
Langston Hughes

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You Too, "Can Do" with a "Can Do" Attitude!

"The trouble with the future is that it is not what it used to be."

Jean Paul Valery

"A person without a sense of humor is like a wagon without springs jolted by every pebble in the road."

Henry Ward Beecher

*"**Can Do** is a road map for personal and professional goal setting...laced with humor and real life examples...a must read for anyone trying to put focus and purpose in their lives."*

Virginia Watson, Director
State Literacy Resource Center

"...I love this book...it is a must write in book. It is an easy step to translate ideas into achievable goals...focused in writing and committed to on paper! Powerful stuff!"

Katie Dovovan, Marketing Consultant
and Director of Marketing for
Full Circle Broadcasting, Inc.

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